DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 255 950 CS 208 915

AUTHOR Johnson, Sammye
TITLE Attitudes, Values and Background of High School Journalists Compared with the Media Elite.
PUB DATE Aug 85
NOTE 48p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (68th, Memphis, TN, August 3-6, 1985).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Comparative Analysis; *Demography; High Schools; *High School Students; *Journalism; Journalism Education; *Mass Media; *Media Research; Political Issues; Social Problems; Socioeconomic Background; *Student Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS *Journalists

ABSTRACT

To compare attitudes, values, and background of high school journalists with those of the media elite (journalists already working in the media), a survey was administered to 132 public and private high school students attending the Trinity University Journalism Institute during June 5-9, 1983. These students were the editors of their newspapers, yearbooks, and literary magazines. Students' personal backgrounds, such as fathers' educational and occupational status, metropolitan environment, and solid middle or upple middle class homes, were similar to those of adult journalists surveyed. Students either matched or exceeded the privileged levels reported by the media elite. On half of the social and political issues included--which featured questions about abortion, income limits, affirmative action, homosexual rights, and environmental protection--students scored about the same as the adult media elite. However, students are much more religious than the media elite. It appears that journalists may be moving to the right on a number of attitudes. The survey will be replicated each year during the Journalism Institute, with followup surveys being made to determine whether students majored in journalism, attended selected colleges, or changed their attitudes and values on social and political issues. (DF)

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ATTITUDES, VALUES AND BACKGROUND OF HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISTS COMPARED WITH THE MEDIA ELITE

by

Sammye Johnson
Associate Professor
Department of Communication
Trinity University
San Antonio, Texas

A PAPER SUBMITTED TO THE SECONDARY EDUCATION DIVISION, AEJMC 1985 ANNUAL CONVENTION, MEMPHIS, TN.

CS 208 915

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ATTITUDES, VALUES AND BACKGROUND
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Abstract

Lichter and Rothman (1981) and Johnstone et al (1971) found that today's journalists had a liberal attitude, a secular outlook and a cosmopolitan background, and were in a position to compete for power and influence with other elite groups in society.

What of tomorrow's journalists? How do their attitudes and background compare with those already working in the media? Can we expect them to hold the same values as the media elite? And how early are these values and attitudes manifested? A survey to determine this was administered to 132 public and private high school students attending the Trinity University Journalism Institute during June 5-9, 1983. These students were the editors of their newspapers, yearbooks and literary magazines.

Students' personal backgrounds, such as fathers' educational and occupational status, metropolitan environment, and solid middle or upper middle class homes, were similar to those of adult journalists surveyed. Students either matched or exceeded the privileged levels reported by the media elite. On half of the social and political issues included, which featured questions about abortion, income limits, affirmative action, homosexual rights, and environmental protection, students scored about the same as the adult media elite. On several issues, then, students are already liberal. However, they are much more religious than the media elite reported. It appears that journalists may be moving to the right on a number of attitudes, including classifying themselves as left, right or middle of the political spectrum.

This research is a start at examining the attitudes and background of the youngest "professional" journalism group, those working on high school publications. The survey will be replicated each year during the Journalism Institute, with followup surveys being made to discover whether students majored in journalism, whether they attended select colleges, and whether their attitudes and values on social and political issues change over the years. Besides an analysis of the survey, the paper includes a discussion of areas for future research.

BACKGROUND

In 1981 Lichter and Rothman published the results of their surveys on the media elite that confirmed what many media watchers had suspected for many years: the American media elite is essentially liberal in attitude.[1] More than half (54 percent) of those surveyed described themselves as liberal, with only 19 percent choosing the right side of the spectrum, and 27 percent checking middle of the road.[2]

The surveys consisted of hour-long interviews during 1979-1980 with 240 journalists and broadcasters at the most influential media outlets throughout the country, including the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, Time, Newsweek, U.S. News and World Report, and news departments at CBS, NBC, ABC, and PBS.[3] Reporters, editors, bureau chiefs, columnists, department heads, correspondents, anchormen, producers, film editors and news executives were interviewed in order to achieve a broad cross-section of those responsible for news content.[4]

In addition to determining the social and political attitudes of the media elite, defined as those journalists working at the most prestigious and influential national media institutions, Lichter and Rothman also looked at the social and personal backgrounds of these journalists.[5] For the most part, the Lichter and Rothman survey confirmed the 1971 Johnstone et al research identification of journalists as white, male, college graduates, with fathers who were professional or managerial.[6]

However, over the past 10 years, the number of journalists reporting these particular social and political characteristics appears to be decreasing. While a majority of journalists are still liberal, the Lichter and Rothman results do show a gain in the number of media elite classifying themselves as conservative when compared to figures from the earlier Johnstone survey. Johnstone reported 63 percent of the top newsmakers as being liberal in ideology, with 27 percent middle of the road, and only 10 percent as conservative.[7]

It appears that over a 10 year period, the pool of media elite reflects some significant changes, as young men and women enter the journalism field and as older journalists leave it. While college students are more liberal than the general population, conservatism among students has been growing in recent years, with most students describing themselves as middle of the road.[8] When college students were asked to characterize their political views in 1970, 37 percent listed the liberal position, 45 percent chose middle of the road, and 18 percent selected conservative.[9] Eight years later, in 1978, college students had shifted to the right, with 26 percent indicating liberal, 58 percent choosing middle of the road, and 17 percent checking conservative.[10] Some changes may be taking place in terms of the media's demographics and personal characteristics.

For example, in the Johnstone research, 59 percent of the news executives of prominent, prestigious media organizations said

they were Protestant in religious background.[11] Twenty-two percent identified themselves as Catholic, 12 percent as Jewish, and just 6 percent indicated other or none for religious affiliation.[12] Yet 10 years later, the Lichter and Rothman survey reported that "exactly 50 percent of the media elite eschew any religious affiliation."[13] Fourteen percent said they were Jewish, 20 percent listed Protestant, and 11 percent indicated Catholic.[14]

With its liberal attitudes, its secular outlook, and its cosmopolitan background (most are from northeast or north central states and metropolitan areas[15]), today's journalists are clearly in position to compete for power and influence with other elite groups such as black leaders, feminists, consumer groups, labor unions and business leaders.[16]

But what of tomorrow's journalists? How do their attitudes and backgrounds compare with those already working in the media? Can we expect them to hold the same values as the media elite? And how early do these values and attitudes occur? These questions and others formed the background to the following survey made in San Antonio, Texas, during June 5-9, 1983.

METHODOLOGY

In order to assess the attitudes of young journalism students, a survey was constructed based on previous questions asked by Lichter and Rothman and Johnstone in their research with adult journalists. (See Appendix 1 for survey.) The survey was administered to 132 public and private high school students attending

the Trinity University Journalism Institute during June 5-9, 1983. The institute involves a week-long program consisting of newspaper, yearbook, literary magazine and photography workshops. High school students from Texas and Louisiana attend to gain information and assistance from professionals in such areas as news judgment, production, layout, editorials, features, etc.; these students are the executive editors, managing editors, news editors, photography editors, etc. of their publications. Typically, they will be seniors at their schools in the coming fall term. Indeed, the group could be described as the journalism elite of high school media. These students are the ones who control the news content of their publications and who make the key editorial decisions. Also, their involvement in the media at this level, and the fact they would attend a workshop to make themselves better, more effective editors, may very well be the prelude to their eventual employment as journalists and editors in the "real world."

A nine page questionnaire included a number of social and political questions asked of journalists in the Lichter and Rothman surveys, and solicited data about personal background and demographics to correlate with both the Lichter/Rothman and the Johnstone research. All the basic personal characteristics information was asked, such as sex, age, residence location, educational aspirations, ethnic background, religious background, father's education and occupation, and family income. Additionally, the students were asked to describe their mothers' education and

occupation, two questions that had not been included in previous surveys of journalists. Since there are significant numbers of single parent families, it was felt that to omit the mother from questions could result in incomplete answers. Students whose mothers are the heads of the family as a result of divorce or death of the father might not even know what their fathers' education or occupation were. In terms of environmental influence, the background of the mother could be as significant in affecting the development of the student as the background of the father has long assumed to be. Further, it seemed likely that some households could have a professional mother and a blue collar father, and that the professional mother would be important as a role model for further educational and professional goals.

In determining the core questions that would pinpoint liberal/conservative attitudes toward foreign policy, social, political and moral issues, it became necessary to consider whether a particular question was still relevant, and whether it would still be an issue in years to come. Present plans are to administer this survey every year to participants in the Trinity University Journalism Institute in order to examine any trends or changes that may be occurring among high school youth interested in journalism. Also, the survey needed to be usable several years in the future so that each group could be re-surveyed to see if they had indeed decided to major in journalism in college, if they did enter some form of communications as a career, and whether their attitudes had become more liberal or conservative since high school.

Sixteen statements were selected from the Lichter and Rothman media elite survey that fit these requirements and which could be answered on a strongly disagree to strongly agree continuum. Students were also asked to describe their general political leanings on an extremely liberal to extremely conservative scale, to identify themselves with a political party, and to indicate who they would have voted for in the 1980 presidential election.

The survey was administered to the 132 students attending the Journalism Institute. The survey took approximately 15 minutes to fill out and collection took place immediately upon completion.

RESULTS

The 132 students responding to the survey consisted of 98 females and 34 males. Newspaper and yearbook editors comprised 75 percent of the sample, with literary magazine and photography editors numbering 25 percent. Attendance at a journalism institute of this kind involves a certain self-selection process that must be considered. Students must not only want to attend such a skills workshop, but must also either be able to pay for it themselves or have a school with discretionary funding for student workshops and programs. High schools paid the full fee of $145 for 58 percent of the respondents; the schools paid a portion of the fee, with either the parents or the individual student making up the difference, for 13 percent of the respondents. The remaining 29 percent indicated that either their parents or they were responsible for the workshop fees.

Exactly half of the respondents were 17 years or older, and 71 percent were going to be in the 12th grade (seniors). Twenty-nine percent of the students were 16 years of age, 17 percent were 15 years old, and only 4 percent were 14 years old at the time the survey was administered. No one was going to be less than a sophomore (10th grade) in high school in the fall.

Thirty-seven high schools (seven were private schools) participated in the Journalism Institute, with as many as 17 students enrolling from one school. Most schools sent three to six students. High schools from all over Texas were represented, with four schools from Louisiana.

Sixty percent of the students lived in major metropolitan areas, using the 1980 U.S. Census definition of Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area as the determinant. Thus, the majority of students taking the survey lived in either Dallas, Ft. Worth, San Antonio, Houston, Corpus Christi, Beaumont, Harlingen, Waco, Killeen, Port Arthur (all Texas cities), Lake Charles or Lafayette (both Louisiana cities).

Five percent of the respondents lived in suburbs of SMSA cities, attending suburban school districts.

A total of 35 percent resided in cities with populations of 25,000 or less. This broke down to 14 percent from cities in the 10,000-25,000 range; 10 percent from cities in the 2,500-10,000 range; 8 percent from cities in the 1,000-2,500 range; and 3 percent from communities with less than 1,000 people.

Ninety-two percent of the respondents lived in the state of

Texas, with 8 percent living in Louisiana. Indeed, 65 percent of the students were born in Texas, and 7 percent in Louisiana, which was the next largest natal state. Other birth states represented by as few as one to three students were California, New York, Indiana, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Hawaii, Ohio, Arkansas, Florida, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Virginia, Alabama, Washington, Illinois, Oregon, and Arizona. Washington, D.C. was also named as a birth place, as were Mexico, India, Hong Kong, Italy and Okinawa.

In terms of ethnic background, 77 percent of the students were Anglo, 20 percent were Hispanic, 1 percent black, 1 percent Oriental, and 2 percent Indian (Hindu).

Ninety-two percent said they intended to attend college, with 6 percent indicating that they don't know, and 2 percent saying they had no college plans. Fifteen percent said they were already committed to a major in journalism or communications, 47 percent said they were not sure, and 38 percent said they did not intend to major in journalism in college.

The majority of students (60 percent) named a Texas college or university as their choice, with 7 percent selecting an Eastern college, 6 percent picking a Southern school, and 2 percent each indicating a Western or Midwestern university. Twenty-three percent were undecided as to college choice at this time.

Questions about parental educational and occupational status revealed the following information (see Table 1 for summary). In

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TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

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33 percent of the responses, fathers had a high school education or less; 17 percent of the fathers had some college; 33 percent had a college degree; 14 percent had a master's degree, medical degree, law degree or other advanced degree; and in 3 percent of the sample, the students said they didn't know what their fathers' educational background was. The mothers' educational background revealed 37 percent with a high school degree or less; 26 percent with some college; 27 percent with a college degree; 8 percent with an advanced degree of some sort; and 2 percent not knowing what their mothers' educational background was.

Forty-eight percent of the students listed a professional occupation for their fathers; 18 percent indicated service, sales or clerical positions; 20 percent listed blue collar jobs; 4 percent named ranching or farming; and 10 percent said they either didn't know or their father was deceased, disabled or retired. Forty percent of the mothers were said to be housewives; 30 percent had professional careers; 26 percent were in service, sales or clerical positions; 1 percent held blue collar jobs; and in 3 percent of the surveys, the respondents said they didn't know.

Family income was broken into 10 levels of $5,000 increments ranging from under $10,000 to over $50,000. However, 51 percent of the students said they didn't know what their families' yearly income was. Seventeen percent checked over $50,000 for income, with only 2 percent checking the other extreme of under $10,000. Ten percent fell in the $40,000-$50,000 range; 9 percent were in the $25,000-$40,000 range; and 11 percent were in the $10,000-$25,000 range.

When asked to indicate their religion, 48 percent of the students said they were Protestant (with Baptist being the most frequently named denomination); 44 percent said they were Roman Catholic; 2 percent said they were Jewish; 4 percent said they were agnostic; and 2 percent said they were Hindu.

For parental religious background, students indicated about the same statistical breakdown. In 42 percent of the responses, mothers were Protestant; they were Catholic in 48 percent of the responses; Jewish in 2 percent; agnostic in 2 percent, Hindu in 2 percent; and in 4 percent of the surveys no answer was given. For fathers, 43 percent were said to be Protestant; 43 percent Catholic; 2 percent Jewish; 3 percent agnostic; 2 percent Hindu; with 7 percent of the students giving no answer for this question.

When asked how often do you attend church, synagogue or temple, 57 percent said they went to services once a week; 8 percent said they attended every other week; 11 percent checked once a month; 9 percent said they went only on special occasions like Easter, Christmas or Hanukkah; 8 percent said they attended once or twice a year; and 5 percent checked never. Two percent left this question blank.

At this point, the survey began asking questions dealing with political ideology and attitudes toward foreign policy, social, political and moral issues (see Table 2 for summary). Students were

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TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

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first asked to describe their general political leanings on a

continuum of extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Twenty-nine percent fell on the liberal side, 48 percent checked middle of the road, and 22 percent opted for the conservative position. One percent did not answer this question.

Students were next asked to identify themselves with a political party. Forty-eight percent said they would be (or already were) Republican; 26 percent checked Democrat; 19 percent said they were independent; and 7 percent did not check anything. When asked who they would have voted for in the 1980 presidential election, 19 percent selected Jimmy Carter; 58 percent chose Ronald Reagan; 5 percent named John Anderson; 1 percent listed George Bush as an "other" choice. Seventeen percent said they would not have voted for any of the candidates.

The next 16 questions surveyed attitudes on a five scale range of strongly disagree to strongly agree. Neutral positions were taken to a significant degree on almost all of the questions. In the areas of guaranteed jobs and redistribution of income, students showed themselves to be essentially pro-free enterprise: 48 percent took a conservative position, saying the federal government should not guarantee a job to anyone who wants one. Twenty-four percent said they favored guaranteed employment, while 27 percent checked neutral on the statement. They overwhelmingly rejected (86 percent, with only 7 percent checking neutral) the need for a cap on incomes, and also disagreed that differences in income should be reduced. On that statement, 70 percent selected what would be the basic capitalistic position, with 19 percent indicating

neutrality, and 11 percent in favor of income redistribution.

Thirty-eight percent said they were in favor of strong affirmative action measures to ensure minority representation in the workplace, while 36 percent took a neutral stance. Twenty-six percent disagreed with the statement.

Sixty-seven percent rejected the proposition that major corporations should be publicly owned, with 21 percent indicating neutrality, and 12 percent agreeing to public ownership of big businesses.

On environmental issues, students were more liberal, with 76 percent disagreeing with the statement that "our environmental problems are not as serious as people have been led to believe." Eighteen percent checked neutral here, with 6 percent agreeing that environmental problems have been overrated.

In the area of foreign policy, the students split on the statement that "the main goal of U.S. foreign policy has been to protect American business interests." Thirty-three percent disagreed with the statement, while 30 percent agreed with it. The neutral position was taken by 38 percent of the students.

Seventy percent disagreed with the statement that the U.S. should supply arms to countries friendly to the U.S. regardless of the policies of the regimes in those countries. Here 23 percent checked neutral, with 7 percent saying they would sell arms to friends regardless of their politics. However, 32 percent would ban foreign arms sales altogether or restrict them only to democratic countries. On this statement, 37 percent were neutral, with 33

percent disagreeing. Only 3 percent of the students would sell arms to any and all countries willing to pay for them; 83 percent disagreed with this statement, with 14 percent checking neutral.

Sixty-one percent agreed that the U.S. has helped Third World nations, while 36 percent were neutral on this issue. Three percent disagreed with the statement.

Sixty-five percent believe that the American legal system favors the criminal rather than the victim. Here 21 percent disagreed, and only 14 percent checked neutral.

When queried about their attitudes toward sex and sex roles, students gave the following responses. Thirty-eight percent would uphold the rights of homosexuals to teach in public schools, with 30 percent indicating they were neutral on this issue. Thirty-two percent would ban homosexuals from public school teaching.

When asked whether the government should regulate sexual activities between consenting adults, only 10 percent agreed, with 72 percent opposing state control over sexual activities. Nineteen percent were neutral here.

Fifty-six percent agreed that women should have the right to decide for themselves whether to have an abortion (36 percent strongly agreed with the statement). Fourteen percent said they were neutral on the issue, while 28 percent disagreed (with 20 percent strongly against abortions).

Fifty-five percent believed that smoking marijuana is morally wrong, while 27 percent disagreed with that statement. Twenty-three percent said they were neutral.

DISCUSSION

In the 1971 Johnstone survey of news executives in prominent organizations, it was found that over two-thirds had upper middle class backgrounds with fathers in professional or managerial positions.[17] Twenty-five percent of the respondents said their fathers had graduated from college.[18] Less than 10 percent of the top newsmakers surveyed then were women, and 75 percent were college graduates.[19] These white, male newsmakers were either Democrat or independent in party affiliation (only 8.5 percent called themselves Republican), and were left leaning in 63 percent of the cases.[20] Twenty-seven percent identified themselves as middle of the road, and only 10 percent described themselves as conservative.[21]

Lichter and Rothman's later survey of the media elite reported the following social and personal backgrounds: 95 percent were white (in the Johnstone survey, there were no minorities represented at the executive level in prominent news organizations), but the number of males had dropped to 79 percent.[22] Like those surveyed by Johnstone, the media elite was primarily from northeast or north central states and from metropolitan areas.[23] In 40 percent of those surveyed, fathers had graduated from college and also had professional occupations.[24] Ninety-three percent of those surveyed were college graduates, with 55 percent reporting postgraduate study (up from the 10 percent reporting advanced degrees in 1971).[25] Fifty-four percent placed themselves on the liberal side, 27 percent said they were middle of the road, and 19 percent chose the right side of the spectrum.[26]

High school journalists in this survey already show some of the same characteristics as their adult cohorts in the media. In the Journalism Institute survey group, 77 percent were white. Since the overwhelming majority of students was from Texas, it was not surprising to have a significant number of Hispanics (20 percent) in the elite editorial positions at their high schools. However, blacks were still poorly represented, at 1 percent, even at this level.

Both Johnstone and the Lichter/Rothman team have commented on the lack of women in top news positions, despite their numbers in other areas of journalism and communications. However, the trend of increasing percentages of females majoring in journalism in college continues, according to the 1981 national survey of journalism schools conducted by Peterson.[27] Peterson reported that women currently make up 57.5 percent of total enrollment figures.[28] Certainly, this interest in journalism seems evident at the high school level, since 74 percent of those attending the Trinity University workshops were female.

In terms of background, the majority of these high school students, while not from northeast or north central states, are from metropolitan areas. And with three of the top 10 population centers (Houston, Dallas and San Antonio) in the U.S. represented, these students could be said to be cosmopolitan in their backgrounds. Certainly, with the increasing population shift toward the Sunbelt states, it can be hypothesized that over the next decade, more and more journalists will be coming out of the southwest part of the United States.

The adult elite journalists were from socially privileged upbringings in both surveys, being raised in solid middle or upper middle class homes. Only one in five of the journalists surveyed by Lichter and Rothman said their father was employed in a blue collar or low status white collar job.[29] Here, high school journalists supported the privileged status of the adult journalists. Since 58 percent of the high schools paid for their students to attend the workshops, it can be assumed that these are fairly affluent districts, willing to support extracurricular activities to the advantage of their journalism programs.

Additionally, in terms of parental background, students exceeded the previously reported father educational background, with 47 percent of the high schoolers' fathers having a college or advanced degree. Furthermore, 35 percent of the mothers were college or advanced degree holders. High school journalists also placed 48 percent of their fathers in professional occupations and 30 percent of their mothers. Clearly, these students are following the traditional background patterns of established journalists.

While more than half of those surveyed didn't know their family income, a reasonable figure since many parents do not share financial information with their children, 17 percent did report a family income of more than $50,000. Furthermore, 10 percent selected the $40,000-$50,000 range, and only 7 percent reported incomes at the low end under $15,000.

With 92 percent of the high school students planning to attend college, it can be assumed that tomorrow's journalists will continue to be well educated individuals.

Ideologically, the students are not as liberal as their adult cohorts, but a significant 29 percent did place themselves on the liberal side of the spectrum. Forty-eight percent said they were middle of the road, and 22 percent took a conservative stance. This is more in line with what college students in general reported in 1978. What cannot be determined is whether adult journalists were already liberal when they entered the field or whether they became liberal afterwards. Followup surveys of the high school journalists could shed information on this question.

A surprising 48 percent of the high school students identified themselves with the Republican Party, in states that have traditionally been Democratic Party enclaves. Studies of the media elite since 1964 have revealed strong Democratic voting patterns, with majorities for Johnson, Humphrey, McGovern and Carter in presidential elections.[30] Lichter and Rothman point out that "the Democratic margin among elite journalists has been 30 to 50 percent greater than among the entire electorate."[31] In comparison, a 26 percent response among high school students for the Democratic Party does seem low, although the 19 percent reporting themselves as independent seems about right. Perhaps since these students appear to have high income and professional family backgrounds, a greater proportion of Republican parents can be found.

Even more interesting were students' choices for president if they could have voted in 1980. The majority, or 58 percent, would have voted for Reagan, with only 19 percent selecting Carter. Obviously, Reagan gained some Democratic votes from this group.

With exactly half of the students in the survey already 17 years or older, this group will be able to vote in the 1984 election. The number of students saying they would not have voted, 17 percent, was significant and reinforced the independent label of part of the group.

It was in the area of religion where the most significant differences appeared. Again, these high school students are still living at home and under parental influences, which could be factors in their religious attitudes at this time. In 1971, in the Johnstone survey, 59 percent of the news executives identified themselves as Protestant, 22 percent as Catholic, 12 percent as Jewish, and 6 percent as having no affiliation.[32] Yet in the 1979-1980 survey by Lichter and Rothman, 50 percent said they had no religious affiliation, with only 8 percent attending services weekly and 86 percent seldom or never attending religious services.[33] Among high school journalists, 95 percent identify themselves with a formal religion, as do their parents. And 57 percent attend religious services once a week, with only 13 percent falling into the seldom or never category. Of course, Texas and Louisiana are part of the Bible Belt, with strong religious ties taken for granted.

While the media elite has been characterized as very secular in its outlook and as being much less religious than people in general, again it is difficult to know whether this secularization occurred when they entered the journalism field or whether they already held this position. This is something that can be tracked through further followup research with the high school journalists.

But it is possible that the next generation of journalists may be closer in religious outlook to the American public at large.

The elite media are liberal in overall attitudes toward a wide range of social and political issues, according to Lichter and Rothman. They support environmental protection, affirmative action, women's rights, homosexual rights, and sexual freedom in general. They have a strong preference for welfare capitalism and assistance to the poor in the form of income redistribution and guaranteed employment. Yet they are not socialists and reject the proposition that major corporations should be publicly owned.[34]

When comparisons are made on similar questions asked of both adult and high school journalists, some strong similarities can already been seen (see Table 3 for summary). It should be noted

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TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

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that Lichter and Rothman's survey of attitudes on social issues used a four point scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree rather than the five point scale that includes the neutral position. However, rather than force a position with the high school students, which could have resulted in questions being left unanswered, it was decided to include the neutral response as an option. Not all high school students can be expected to have strong opinions one way or the other on the day's key issues.

Students tended to the conservative position on the question of guaranteed jobs, with 48 percent against a guarantee, and

the majority of journalists also put themselves in that category. However, a strong 48 percent of adult journalists favored guaranteed employment, while only 24 percent of the students agreed.

The media elite was strongly in favor of reducing the income gap, with 68 percent agreeing with the statement, and 33 percent disagreeing. Students took a much more conservative stance on this issue, with 70 percent rejecting the statement that differences in income between people in this country should be reduced. In this, students appeared to be more in line with the traditional American private enterprise approach.

Yet adult journalists are pro-capitalism, as evidenced by their 86 percent belief that limits should not be set on incomes, that people with more ability should earn more. Students matched this figure exactly, with only 7 percent being in favor of a limit.

On the question of affirmative action, the media elite reported an 80 percent pro-strong action. However, only 38 percent of the students were pro-affirmative action, with 36 percent taking a neutral stance. This issue has traditionally split the liberal constituency, and it may be that affirmative action is becoming less desirable across the board to Americans.

Also, the media elite overwhelmingly rejected the proposition that major corporations should be publicly owned, by 88 percent. Students also rejected it by 69 percent, with 12 percent matching their adult cohorts' 13 percent agreement that big corporations should be publicly owned.

On the environmental question, only 19 percent of the media

elite agreed that "our environmental problems are not as serious as people have been led to believe." Even fewer students, just 6 percent, agreed with the statement. Thus, both groups showed themselves to be more liberal on environmental issues, with the adults strongly disagreeing with the statement 54 percent of the time and the students doing so 27 percent.

The media elite was evenly split on whether the main goal of U.S. foreign policy has been to protect American business interests. Fifty-one percent agreed with the statement, while 50 percent disagreed. The students were also split, with 33 percent disagreeing, 38 percent taking a neutral position, and 30 percent agreeing with the statement.

On other foreign policy issues such as arms sales, journalists were again split, with 48 percent stating they would ban foreign arms sales altogether or restrict them to democratic countries. Forty-seven percent would supply arms to any "friendly" country, regardless of the regime, and only 4 percent would be willing to sell arms to all comers. Students took a more hardline approach, with 70 percent disagreeing with the statement that the U.S. should supply arms to countries friendly to the U.S., regardless of their politics or policies. However, students were split on banning or restricting sales, with 32 percent agreeing with the statement, 37 percent neutral, and 33 percent disagreeing. Only 3 percent of the students would sell arms to any and all willing to pay for them.

On the Third World question, the media elite disagreed by 75 percent with the statement that "America has helped Third World

nations." Here, one of the sharpest differences occurred between the two groups, since 61 percent of the students agreed with the statement, and only 3 percent disagreed. However, the awareness of high school students to Third World issues and criticisms is questionable.

On sexual and moral issues, the media elite is considerably more liberal than the public at large, opposing governmental as well as traditional constraints or restraints. As Lichter and Rothman pointed out, "Large majorities oppose government regulation of sexual activities, uphold a pro-choice position on abortion, and reject the notion that homosexuality is wrong."[35] Indeed, 85 percent said that homosexuals should be able to teach in public schools. Students are surprisingly liberal on this question, with 38 percent agreeing with their adult cohorts and a strong 30 percent reporting neutrality on the issue. Still, a significant 32 percent of the students would not let homosexuals teach in public schools.

When asked if the government should regulate sex between consenting adults, 97 percent of the media elite was strongly opposed. Student journalists were in agreement by an equally strong 72 percent.

Adult journalists agreed by 90 percent that women should have the right to decide for themselves whether to have an abortion. That 56 percent of the students agreed with this issue of women's rights could be a reflection of the fact that a majority of females was attending the workshops.

Yet on the issue of smoking marijuana, students deviated from

their liberal tendencies. While only 26 percent of the news media consider smoking marijuana to be morally wrong, an astounding 55 percent of the students agreed with the statement. Twenty-three percent were neutral, and 22 percent did not see marijuana as a moral issue. This position seems at odds with the students' more liberal responses on the sexual and abortion issues. Perhaps the illegality of marijuana weighed more heavily for students in answering this question.

SUMMARY: AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This survey is the first of a series of surveys planned to learn more about the attitudes and values of the youngest "professional" journalism group, those working on high school publications, and their relationship to the media elite. The survey will be replicated each year during the Trinity University Journalism Institute. There are already trends and portents to watch for; there are numerous areas that lend themselves to further research. Within the existing data, cross tabulations and further analysis will be made. Additionally, followup research is needed to determine whether journalists are liberal when they enter the field or whether they become liberal afterwards. Consequently, in addition to replicating the survey each year, this first student group will be re-surveyed in four or five years to see whether the students are still involved in journalism and whether their attitudes have changed. A control group of San Antonio high school students who do not participate in journalism activities at their schools will be surveyed this fall to see whether they have similar or dissimilar

backgrounds and values in comparison to the student journalists.

It appears that there already are similarities to the media elite as early as the high school level. In terms of personal background, these Texas and Louisiana high school students, like the adult journalists surveyed by Lichter and Rothman, were for the most part from solid middle or upper middle class backgrounds, with almost half of the high schoolers' fathers having a college or advanced degree. This exceeded the previously reported media elite's father educational background. Furthermore, more than one-third of the mothers were college or advanced degree holders. The impact of the professional mother cannot be discounted, especially in so many single parent homes; also, some households had a professional mother and a blue collar father, making the mother an important role model for further educational and professional goals.

Only one in five of the journalists surveyed by Lichter and Rothman said their father was employed in a blue collar or low status white collar job. Again, the students supported the privileged background, with almost half of the students listing a professional occupation for their fathers, and only one in five listing a blue collar job.

Thus, in terms of parental educational and occupational status, the high school students either matched or exceeded privileged levels reported by the media elite. Whether this continues over time will be measured by subsequent surveys. An area of significant difference occurred in religious affiliation, with students being

overwhelmingly affiliated with a formal religion. What this portends for the religious identification of future media elite (50 percent eschewed religious affiliation in 1981) needs to be examined in further research.

Like the media elite, the majority of students in this survey lived in metropolitan areas, primarily Houston, Dallas, Ft. Worth or San Antonio. Residential zip codes of the students are available and will be studied at length in the future. However, some preliminary observations can be made, which may explain the large Republican Party identification, an identification at odds with the virtually traditional Democratic Party or independent affiliation of the media elite. A significant number of the Dallas students reside on the north side of Dallas, in the 3rd congressional district of Texas. This part of Dallas is not only one of the most prosperous parts of the state, but it is also one of the most intellectually influential; it is strongly free enterprise, politically conservative and Republican.[36] In the 1980 presidential election, 73 percent of the voters in the 3rd district voted for Ronald Reagan.[37] This same profile holds true for the west side of Houston, which also sent a number of students to the Journalism Institute. Houston's 7th congressional district gave 74 percent of the vote to Reagan.[38] This is an area that needs to be explored further in analysis of existing data and in future surveys.

Texas has been a major part of the Sunbelt's population explosion, with increasing numbers of Northerners moving to the state. Although the majority of students were born in Texas, 35 percent

were born outside the state, reinforcing the image that Texas is not a state of natives. Since most of the media elite has a northeastern or north central background, it will be interesting to see whether increasing numbers of Southwesterners join the ranks of top journalists.

Another area deserving research is whether these students actually major in journalism in college, and whether they become professional journalists. Hess's study of the Washington, D.C. press corps stressed that reporters do not necessarily major in journalism, with more than half of the Washington group having no university journalism course work.[39] Instead, Hess reported, Washington reporters overwhelmingly majored in the humanities and liberal arts, with one-third attending very select colleges.[40] This tendency may already be manifesting itself with the high school students, since only 15 percent said they intended to major in journalism in college. While there is no real correlation between the media elite and journalism school enrollment figures, it is certainly possible that the elite become interested in journalism at the high school level, but choose to major in another field at college. Later, they may gravitate to a career in journalism. By studying these high school students (92 percent plan to attend college) over a period of time, the answer to this question may be found.

Furthermore, the students named the colleges they were interested in attending, so studies can be made as to selectivity based on percentage of applicants accepted, test scores of recent

freshman classes, and other scholastic measurements. Typically, the majority of the Washington press corps attended highly select colleges and universities, as did journalists surveyed by Johnstone.

As the development of the media elite is determined and traced, the increasing numbers of women entering journalism cannot be ignored. Even at the high school level, women make up an overwhelming 74 percent of the editors of the various publications. If this trend continues, and there is no reason to believe that it will not, the impact of women should be felt at the national level and may affect the attitudes and values being held by the media elite. In 1971, only 9 percent of Johnstone's elite were women; 10 years later, Lichter and Rothman put women at 21 percent of the media elite.

That journalism is no longer a male enclave will have to be reckoned with; equally important will be the role of ethnic minorities in the field. Previous studies, such as those of Johnstone, did not even have minorities represented as news executives in prominent organizations. Lichter and Rothman's studies showed minute gains for minorities, with one in 20 checking nonwhite. The survey of high school journalists pinpointed ethnic background, yielding a significant 20 percent Hispanic or Mexican-American figure. However, blacks and Orientals are still poorly represented at even the high school level, each having only a 1 percent representation. At any rate, the role of Hispanics in America is being felt at numerous levels in society, not the least of which is likely to be communications.

Background, though, is just one aspect of this research. Equally important are the attitudes and values being held by high school journalists and their correlation to the media elite. Students scored the same as their adult cohorts on the following issues: against guaranteed jobs, income limits and operating big businesses in the public interest; for environmental protection, abortion, sexual freedom in general. Like the media elite, students showed liberal concern for social areas and were more "American" in a traditional liberal approach on others. Students took opposing, more conservative viewpoints on such issues as narrowing the income gap, supporting affirmative action and homosexual rights, whether the U.S. has helped Third World nations, and whether smoking marijuana is morally wrong. These questions will be asked of future high school groups, in order to replicate attitudes and viewpoints and determine any trends that may be occurring.

While there may be age and regional factors coming into play here, there is still the general question of whether journalists will continue to be liberal and secular. If so, do they become liberal and secular after they enter the journalism field, or do they enter the field with these values and attitudes already formed?

NOTES

1. S. Robert Lichter and Stanley Rothman, "Media and Business Elites," Public Opinion, 4:60 (October/November 1981).
2. Ibid., p. 43.
3. Ibid., p. 42.
4. Ibid., p. 42.
5. Ibid., p. 43.
6. Ibid., p. 43. See also John W.C. Johnstone, Edward J. Slawski, William W. Bowman, The News People: A Sociological Portrait of American Journalists and Their Work (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976).
7. Johnstone, p. 226.
8. Thomas R. Dye and L. Harmon Zeigler, American Politics in the Media Age (Monterey: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., 1983), p. 44.
9. "Opinion Roundup: College Students," Public Opinion, 2:32 (June/July 1979).
10. Ibid., p. 32.
11. Johnstone, p. 227.
12. Ibid., p. 227.
13. Lichter and Rothman, p. 43.
14. Ibid., p. 43.
15. Ibid., p. 43.
16. Ibid., p. 59.
17. Johnstone, p. 225.
18. Ibid., p. 225.
19. Ibid., pp. 225-226.
20. Ibid., p. 226.
21. Ibid., p. 226.
22. Lichter and Rothman, p. 43.
23. Ibid., p. 43.

24. Ibid., p. 43.

25. Ibid., p. 43.

26. Ibid., p. 43.

27. Paul V. Peterson, "Enrollments Reach 77,540, But Growth Curve Levels Off," Journalism Educator 36:4 (January 1982).

28. Ibid., p. 4.

29. Lichter and Rothman, p. 43.

30. Ibid., p. 43.

31. Ibid., p. 44.

32. Johnstone., p. 225.

33. Op. cit., p. 43.

34. Ibid., p. 44.

35. Ibid., p. 45.

36. Michael Barone and Grant Ujifusa, The Almanac of American Politics 1982 (Washington, D.C.: Barone & Company, 1981), pp. 1058-1060.

37. Ibid., p. 1059.

38. Ibid., p. 1068.

39. Stephen Hess, The Washington Reporters (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institute, 1981), p. 83.

40. Ibid., p. 83.

TABLE 1: PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN OF STUDENTS' PARENTAL EDUCATIONAL, OCCUPATIONAL AND INCOME STATUS

EDUCATION	
Father less than high school	13%
Father high school graduate	20
Father some college	17
Father college graduate	33
Father graduate, law, medical degree	14
Don't know father's education	3
Mother less than high school	9
Mother high school graduate	28
Mother some college	26
Mother college graduate	27
Mother graduate, law, medical degree	8
Don't know mother's education	2
OCCUPATION	
Father professional	48%
Father service/sales/clerical	18
Father blue collar	20
Father rancher/farmer	4
Don't know father's occupation	6
Father deceased/disabled/retired	4
Mother professional	30
Mother service/sales/clerical	26
Mother blue collar	1
Mother housewife	53
Don't know mother's occupation	3
INCOME	
Under $10,000	2%
$10,000-$15,000	5
$15,001-$20,000	2
$20,001-$25,000	4
$25,001-$30,000	4
$30,001-$35,000	2
$35,001-$40,000	3
$40,001-$45,000	8
$45,001-$50,000	2
Over $50,000	17
Don't know family income	51

TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT JOURNALISTS' POLITICAL ATTITUDES

GENERAL POLITICAL LEANINGS	
Extremely liberal	5%
Liberal	14
Slightly liberal	10
Middle of the road	48
Slightly conservative	8
Conservative	12
Extremely conservative	2
No answer	1

IDENTIFICATION WITH A POLITICAL PARTY	
Republican	48%
Democrat	26
Independent	19
No answer	7

1980 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CHOICE	
Ronald Reagan	58%
Jimmy Carter	19
John Anderson	5
George Bush	1
Would not have voted	17

TABLE 3: PERCENTAGE COMPARISON OF ATTITUDES ON SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES BETWEEN MEDIA ELITE AND STUDENTS

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Government should guarantee jobs					
Media elite	19	33		35	13
Students	14	34	27	18	6
Top limit on income needed					
Media elite	48	38		10	4
Students	52	35	7	5	2
Government should reduce income differences					
Media elite	13	20		45	23
Students	30	40	19	11	0
Strong affirmative action encouraged					
Media elite	4	16		47	33
Students	10	16	36	27	11
Big corporations should be publicly owned					
Media elite	65	23		9	4
Students	30	37	21	11	1
Environmental problems are not serious					
Media elite	54	27		18	1
Students	27	48	18	5	1
Goal of foreign policy to protect U.S. business					
Media elite	22	28		39	12
Students	6	27	28	29	1
America has helped Third World nations					
Media elite	25	50		19	6
Students	0	3	36	51	10

TABLE 3 (continued)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Homosexuals shouldn't teach in public schools					
Media elite	54	31		12	3
Students	16	22	30	14	18
Government shouldn't regulate sex					
Media elite	1	3		13	84
Students	7	3	13	39	33
Women have right to decide on abortions					
Media elite	5	5		11	79
Students	20	8	14	20	56

APPENDIX 1: SURVEY OF HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISTS

1. What Journalism Institute workshop are you enrolled in?

_____newspaper

_____yearbook

_____literary magazine

_____photography

2. Who paid for your attendance at this Journalism Institute?

_____parents

_____high school

_____self

3. Are you _____male or _____female?

4. How old are you? _____years

5. What grade will you be in school this fall? _____grade

6. What school do you attend?_____

7. What city or town do you live in?_____

8. Please give your home address zip code_____

9. What state do you live in?_____

10. In what state were you born?_____

11. What is your ethnic background?

_____Anglo/Caucasian

_____Mexican-American/Hispanic

_____Black

_____Oriental

_____Other (please specify)

12. Do you intend to go to college when you graduate from high school?

_____yes

_____no

_____don't know

13. If you go to college, do you intend to major in journalism or communications?

_____yes

_____no

_____not sure

14. What college would you like to attend?_____

15. What was the highest level of education attained by your father?

_____less than high school

_____high school graduate

_____some college

_____college graduate (4 year school)

_____graduate, medical or law school

_____don't know

16. What was the highest level of education attained by your mother?

_____less than high school

_____high school graduate

_____some college

_____college graduate (4 year school)

_____graduate, medical or law school

_____don't know

17. What is your father's occupation?_____

18. What is your mother's occupation?_____

19. What is your family's yearly income?

_____under $10,000

_____$10,001-$15,000

_____$15,001-$20,000

_____$20,001-$25,000

_____$25,001-$30,000

_____$30,001-$35,000

_____$35,001-$40,000

_____$40,001-$45,000

_____$45,001-$50,000

_____over $50,000

_____don't know

20. What is your religion?

_____Protestant

_____Roman Catholic

_____Jewish

_____Greek Orthodox

_____None (atheist)

_____None (agnostic)

_____Other (please specify)

21. What is the religious affiliation of your

mother_____

father_____

22. How often do you go to church, synagogue, or temple?

_____once a week

_____every other week

_____once a month

_____only on special occasions like Easter, Christmas, Hanukkah, Good Friday

_____once or twice a year

_____never

23. If you had to describe your general political leanings, would you say you are

_____extremely liberal

_____liberal

_____slightly liberal

_____middle of the road

_____slightly conservative

_____conservative

_____extremely conservative

24. If you had to identify yourself with a political party, would you be (or are you)

_____Republican

_____Democrat

_____Independent

_____Other (please specify)

25. If you could have voted in the 1980 presidential election, would you have voted for

_____Jimmy Carter

_____Ronald Reagan

_____John Anderson

_____Other (please specify)

_____Would not have voted

The questions on the following pages are an attempt to see your attitudes toward foreign policy, social, political and moral issues.

Read each question carefully, then select the response which is closest to the way you feel about the issue.

26. The federal government should guarantee a job to anyone who wants one.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

27. There should be a top limit on incomes so that no one can earn too much more than others.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

28. Differences in income between people in this country should be reduced.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

29. The federal government should encourage the use of strong affirmative action measures to ensure minority representation in the workplace.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

30. Big corporations should be taken out of private ownership and run in the public interest.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

31. Our environmental problems are not as serious as people have been led to believe.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

32. The main goal of U.S. foreign policy has been to protect American business interests.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

33. In order to protect U.S. interests, the U.S. government should supply arms to countries friendly to the U.S., regardless of the politics or policies of the regimes in these countries.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

34. The U.S. should ban foreign arms sales altogether or restrict them only to democratic countries.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

35. The U.S. should sell arms to any and all countries willing to pay for them.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

36. America has helped the Third World nations.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

37. The American legal system favors the criminal rather than the victim.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

38. Homosexuals shouldn't teach in public schools.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

39. Government should not regulate sexual activities between consenting adults.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

40. Women should have the right to decide for themselves whether to have an abortion.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

41. Smoking marijuana is morally wrong.

_____strongly disagree _____disagree _____neutral _____agree _____strongly agree

42. What is your name?_____

43. Your address_____

_____

44. What is your social security number?_____